

SENATE No. 393

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Benjamin B. Downing

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act establishing the Massachusetts EBT Farmers' Market Project.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Benjamin B. Downing

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Berkshire, Hampshire and Franklin

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MASSACHUSETTS EBT FARMERS' MARKET PROJECT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 18 of the General Laws, as so appearing in the 2006 official edition, is hereby amended by inserting after Section 30 the following section: -
Section 31. Massachusetts EBT Farmers' Market Project.

(a) There shall be within the department, a Massachusetts EBT Farmers' Market Project.

(b) The department shall provide a wired EBT machine to all approved department of agricultural resources farmers' markets, regardless of their monthly EBT sales.

(c) The department shall make available to eligible farmers' markets wireless point-of-service devices for processing electronic benefit transfer transactions, and reimburse the market for other costs associated with electronic benefit transfer transactions, including cellular communication costs, point of service device maintenance costs, and transaction fees.

(d) Farmers' markets eligible for wireless devices from the department shall be at locations without access to electricity, as confirmed by the department of agricultural resources.

(e) The department shall develop a uniform scrip system to be used in conjunction with a wireless point of service device for transacting food stamp purchases at farmers' markets.

(f) The department shall provide a food stamp recipient with a list of participating farmers' markets and a brochure explaining the scrip system each spring.

17 SECTION 2. The department shall notify farmers' markets of the creation of the Project and invite
18 markets to apply to participate. The department shall promulgate regulations establishing an application
19 process for markets interested in obtaining a wireless point of service device and detailing the criteria for
20 the selection of markets, including the viability of the use of wireless technology at the market location,
21 and the food stamp recipient population density in the area. The department shall not require a market to
22 demonstrate a minimum level of food stamp sales as part of its initial eligibility determination, but may
23 consider a market's level of food stamp sales when reviewing an applicant's renewal application.

24 SECTION 3. The program established herein shall not be adopted until the Executive Office of
25 Health and Human Services certifies it has obtained federal approval of the uniform scrip system
26 developed in section 1(e) from the United States Department of Agriculture.